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AUTHOR Shuy, Roger W.
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ABSTRACT

The relationship between sociolinguistics and educational concerns is examined, the focus of the paper being to discover how current developments in sociolinguistics are contributing to the field of bilingual education. Following a brief discussion of related legislation, basic questions concerning bilingual program implementation are raised, regarding resources, goals and objectives and the meaning of bilingual education. The success or failure of bilingual education is seen to depend upon the extent to which sociolinguistic knowledge is called upon or developed in response to five basic issues: needs assessment, goals and objectives, materials and resources, teacher education, and evaluation. Broad indications as to what has been done in these areas are given. A discussion of functional language, functional language competence, and of the usefulness of sociolinguistic research in determining language attitudes and functional language use for bilingual education contexts precedes a description of what a sociolinguistic framework for bilingual education would entail. Materials, resources, teacher education, and evaluation are discussed in this context. The American Institute of Research and the Center for Applied Linguistics models for evaluating Title VII programs are outlined. (CLK)

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Implications of Recent Sociolinguistic Research for the Problems of Migrant Worker Children

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Roger W. Shuy
Georgetown University and
Center for Applied Linguistics

Ghent (May, 1976)

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Implications of Recent Sociolinguistic Research for the Problems of Migrant Worker Children

Roger W. Shuy
Georgetown University and
Center for Applied Linguistics

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Recent events in American educational legislation are instructive about the process of change in American schooling. In January of 1974, after four years of litigation and appeals, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of a San Francisco Chinese family named Lau who claimed that the local school system had violated their constitutional right to access to education by providing that education in a language which was foreign to the learner, in this case, English. By ruling in favor of the Lau family, the U.S. Supreme Court said, in effect, that it is an American citizen's right to expect the strong and the educated to construct learning in such a way as to adjust to the beginning points of the weak and the uneducated. Interestingly enough, education had been claiming this as a basic tenent for years, usually expressed as "starting with the child where he is." Although this principle is widely proclaimed, the reality of the principle is widely absent, for unfortunately, major American educational policy tends to follow a compensatory education model which places little value on diversity and much emphasis on making the child as much like the main-stream as possible as soon as it can be done. The Lau vs. Nichols decision suddenly changed all this and, with one stroke of legislation gave legislative power to what had been almost empty verbiage in teaching and learning.

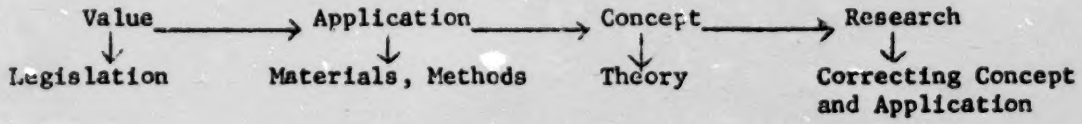
1.0 The Relationship of Sociolinguistics to Educational Concerns

It will not be our purpose here to evaluate the strengths or weaknesses of this particular Supreme Court decision but, rather, to examine how current developments in sociolinguistics are contributing to the field of bilingual education.

This bilingual education legislation, like much of educational legislation, is really an expression of a moral value derived from a great deal of intuition and from very little empirical research. Social scientists had not provided our Congress with a clear data base for bilingual education any more than they had offered ample evidence that enforced busing of school children would improve the plight of segregated Black children. In fact, when confronted with the assertion that bilingual legislation preceded the knowledge upon which it could be based, the lawyers for both Lau and Aspira[1] readily admitted that such was the case, noting further that without such legislation, the knowledge base might never be started.[2] This is not to say that no knowledge base existed prior to legislation, rather that it was far from adequate and convincing. Nor is this to cast criticism on the legislation, for it was undoubtedly well motivated and much needed. It is called to attention, in this case, as a rather humbling reminder that linguistic and educational research here, and in many other instances, tends to follow the legislation rather than precede it.

In fact, the developmental model might be said to look something like the following:

FIGURE 1



1.1 The San Francisco Situation

In San Francisco, the city school system faced the need to develop a master plan by which Lau vs. Nichols could be carried out in the schools. It was at this time, months after the value system had been legislated that a concept and application became foremost in the minds of the schools. In developing this master plan, it became evident that the legislation had left a great deal which was unclear. In order to develop a plan for seven thousand children from Chinese, Spanish, Japanese and Tagalog speaking homes, it was necessary to answer the following questions:

a. Which children can best benefit from bilingual education?

b. Which communities want bilingual education?

c. What do the communities understand bilingual education to be?

d. What are the goals and objectives of bilingual education?

e. What resources are available to implement these goals and objectives?

f. What new resources are needed?

g. What staff training is necessary for successful implementation of these goals?

h. What evaluation procedures can best determine how successful the individuals and programs have been?

1.2 Five Critical Issues

Although each of these questions appears, on the surface, to be an educational question, in reality each involves sociolinguistic knowledge and assistance. Today, the eventual success or failure of bilingual education in the United States will heavily depend on the extent to which sociolinguistic knowledge is called upon or developed in response to five issues involving:

1.2.1 Needs Assessment. This is a term used in America for what a linguist might call sociolinguistic survey work. The schools are growing more and more hostile to the notion of outsiders coming in and doing research on them. Research has become a dirty word but needs assessments are generally acceptable.

1.2.2 Goals or Objectives. Linguists have asserted sociolinguistic theory but they have not yet developed bilingual education theory. Until they have clearly specified the parameters of language maintenance, transitional bilingualism or some intermediate theories, they will not have contributed maximally to bilingual education.

1.2.3 Materials and Resources. Sociolinguistics has made singular contributions in language variability as it relates to phonology and grammar, but not as it relates to functional language. The latter may prove to be the most useful contribution of all.

1.2.4 Teacher Education. Sociolinguistics has contributed the concepts of variability and continuum to education but it has still not impacted clearly enough on either pre-service or in-service education.

1.2.5 Evaluation. Recent government guidelines for implementing the Supreme Court decision have clearly specified that assessment of individual language abilities must go far beyond anything currently in existence. Most language testing, in fact, is discrete-point testing. That is, it isolates a given feature for analysis on the assumption that the correct representation of that feature will reflect a more global understanding than that (or any other) feature might be expected to provide. For example, if a child fails to discriminate between shoes and choose, he can be said to not be an effective speaker of English. The recent government guidelines indicate that such discrete point testing distorts the reality of language usage and must be avoided in the

future. The guidelines argue, instead, for an assessment of spoken language in a natural and realistic social context. They say, in effect, that to measure language effectively, one must hear it spoken continuously in contexts and settings in which natural use of such language can be expected, both in and out of school. The sociolinguistic implications of these guidelines are exciting. They support most of the known critical measurement points of sociolinguistics: the legitimate existence of variation, the need for realistic contextual concerns when analyzing language, the possibility of a language continuum rather than discrete-point polarities and the extreme importance of ethnographic observation and analysis.

At least part of the reason why sociolinguistic knowledge did not preceed legislation in the United States stems from the fact that appropriate research was not conceived of or carried out in time to be useful to the legislators. A second reason is that research had been isolated from the school setting. Third is that educators, especially classroom teachers, had built a defense against research, terming it abstract, impractical and not related to the real problems of teaching. This situation, coupled with the growing hostility of minorities toward researchers, tended to cut off research which could serve the questions posed by the Lau vs. Nichols decision and by educators concerned with falling SAT scores, writing ability, reading and other language arts areas.

Sociolinguistics permeates the five crucial issues noted above in a number of ways. The more obvious sociolinguistic implications derive from the need for effective language descriptions. What I prefer to discuss, however, is the usefulness of research in both language attitudes and functional language use for bilingual education contexts.

2.0 Language Attitudes

Underlying both the issue of needs assessment and goals or objectives is the need for basis information. Crucial to the development of any action program involving bilingualism is the need to determine answers to a number of important questions including the following:

2.1 Language Ability Judgments

What is the extent of the ability of the child to speak the language of the host country or community? Although this would appear to be a simple question to answer, actually it is not that easy. In the U.S., in the past we have simply relied on teacher assessments of the child's ability to speak English. Any analysis of such information, however, can demonstrate many errors. Immigrant children have been said to speak such exotic non-languages as Austrian, American Indian, and Swiss. We also can cite many examples such as that of the Mexican-American community in Lansing, Michigan where the children are said to be fluent in English even though they are by far the lowest achievers in the language-related school subjects such as reading, spelling, writing and speech. The school's inability to assess the child's language abilities accurately is also evident from demographic analyses. In Fairfax County, Virginia for example, 10% of the school population is Black yet 90% of the children identified in that county as educably mentally retarded are Black. The San Francisco schools records show practically no Chinese-Americans as deaf while most of the educably mentally retarded are native Spanish speakers. There is little need for research in this matter. The school statistics speak eloquently to the fact that teachers are generally not competent to assess the language ability of non-native speakers of the host country's language.

In an effort to determine whether parents of immigrant children could identify the English ability of their children any better than could the school personnel, the Center for Applied Linguistics recently conducted a study in the Chinese speaking community of San Francisco, in the Spanish speaking Mexican-American community in El Paso, Texas, in the Spanish speaking Cuban-American community in Miami, Florida and in a Navajo community in Arizona. In each case the parent's ability to assess the English language ability of their own children was neither worse nor better than that of the schools. Using our independent analysis of specific children's ability to use English as a base, the parents and the school records were generally only fifty to sixty percent accurate.

The major conclusions to be drawn from these data are that it is not easy to assess language ability of a student and that accurate assessments of an individual's ability will be best made by a professional. The usual procedure, that of relying on teacher assessment is no more and no less reliable than that of the bureau of census approach, asking the parent. The major problems in teacher assessment are both of teacher knowledge about language and teacher attitudes toward it. Language is so invisible to most people that they think they know all about it. People are not aware of language as they use it, making the subject a fruitful one for stereotyping and false information. The basic attitude of the American schools regarding the assessment of language abilities is that it is easy to do. Either one asks the teacher to do it (after all, the teacher is a professional) or one administers one of our many standardized tests. Our faith in existing standardized tests is astonishing, particularly in the area of language ability, where surface manifestations of language are inevitably assumed to be useful indicators of the critical measurement points of ability. A linguist's casual scrutiny of such tests reveals that they are

highly questionable from the viewpoint of content validity. If an effective needs assessment is to be undertaken, a critical question to be addressed will be the one involving attitudes and abilities in the assessment of language ability.

2.2 Subjective Reactions

A second important language attitude question concerns the subjective feelings of the target language group toward the host language. A critical aspect of needs assessment involves coming to grips with the immigrant group's attitudes toward learning the language of the host country. The literature on language attitudes indicates clearly that motivation for language learning identifies two learner-types: (1) the integrative language learner, whose desire it is to become a part of the host country to the extent that he is willing to abandon his former language and culture. (2) the instrumental language learner, who is interested primarily in "getting along" in the host country without necessarily abandoning his native language and culture. It is important that any program directed to immigrant groups understand the basic motivation of such groups in order to best identify the sort of teaching program which best suits their needs. The information currently available seems to be directed more at adults than children, for a child is motivated by other factors than the larger society's approval and acceptance. Child peer pressure, for example is a great motivator, along with the desire to please someone, often a parent or teacher.

A sociolinguistic perspective on language would also argue that the host society will also need to consider its attitude toward the language of the immigrant. In the case of the children of migrant workers, whose use of the host language will be temporary, it will be useful for immigrants to learn the

host language while preserving the mother tongue, for it will be only a year or two until the child will likely return to his homeland. If the mother tongue is not encouraged and the child loses efficiency in it while gaining efficiency in the host language, we will have succeeded in producing still another problem for the immigrant child when he returns to his homeland and, for that matter, in dealing with his family in the host country. In the United States, one of the most important understandings of the work on language attitudes in the schools has been that of getting the host community to recognize and appreciate the language and culture of the newcomer. Education is somehow predisposed toward unity rather than diversity, despite the fact that it is this very diversity which offers us our humanity. It is diversity which sets off great literature from the commonplace and serves to express, as the English poet, Alexander Pope observed, "what oft was thought but ne'r so well expressed."

In America, work on the language attitudes of minorities has been dominated by research on the attitudes of teachers, since this seems closest to the problem of the children. Naturally one does not go to teachers and offer to change their attitudes, for attitudes are subtle phenomena which operate at the subconscious level. Often original assessments of attitudes can be obtained by offering a stimulus, either in the form of a tape recorded segment of speech or a written observation involving language with which the respondent can agree, disagree or respond at some point on a scale. Most often, the respondent assumes that the question exists in the pedagogical realm rather than as a language attitude question. For example, we have asked teachers, employers, general populations and even children to listen to a speaker on tape, then to assess his intelligence, language ability, employability, potential for success, friendliness, desirability, etc. The results have been alternately predictable and

astonishing. In Miami, for example, it was found that Cuban-American employers reacted more negatively to the Spanish accented English of Cuban-Americans than they did to the speech of vernacular English speaking Miami Blacks.[3] In Washington, D.C., employers were able to identify the four socio-economic classes of Black Washingtonians from as little as thirty seconds of taped speech on the topic of leisure activities.[4] Furthermore, these employers assigned jobs to the taped speakers which stratified exactly according to the speech indicators of socio-economic status. Attitude studies have even been administered to pre-school children. In an original experiment in which tape recorders were placed inside boxes painted like happy clown-faces, a matched guise technique was used with both vernacular and standard Black English to determine the attitudes of children toward these language varities. The results showed that racial prejudice begins as early as four years old in girls, followed slightly later, as usual, by boys.

The field of reading may offer still another instructive example. Some linguists and educators advocated that the language beginning point of the child who habitually speaks a vernacular version of language might be worth examining as the potential cause for reading failure. In the late sixties, several articles appeared, based on their author's unwillingness to believe that these children were not learning to read well (or at all) as a result of some sort of genetic handicap or in some random or accidental distribution.

On the assumption that differences between the child's spoken language and his literacy materials were at least partially responsible for the fact that so many poor readers are found among speakers of various vernacular versions of English, several research directions have been projected. At least three such hypotheses have been posited as approaches for reducting the mismatch between the Vernacular Black English used by some beginning readers and the middle class language in which their initial reading materials are written.[5]

A. First teach children to speak Standard English, then teach them to read it.

B. Develop beginning materials in Vernacular English.

C. Teach teachers about Vernacular English so that they will not confuse its use with real reading problems.

To date, there has been little research to support, without qualification and question, any one of these approaches individually. Research has been hampered by inordinate negative public reaction to any attempts to implement B. A, the standard, historical approach, has never been proved to be supportable. Some progress is being made on C but the road has been, and will continue to be, slow and rocky. These hypotheses are of particular interest to the bilingual situation since parallels can be found in all three of them. The first hypothesis says, essentially, let the immigrants learn our language. The second parallels the bilingual maintenance approach suggesting that learning skills and cognition can best be accommodated in the child's native tongue. The third parallels the bilingual situation in the area of attitudes. It suggests that the host country should be helped to appreciate the values, beliefs, culture and language of the immigrants. It is perfectly obvious that any bilingual situation offers more than a language problem; it almost always suggests a social structure problem as well. Language and culture are inseparable, with language being one conveyance of culture values. In the United States, we have not been notoriously successful in teaching teachers to appreciate the language of vernacular English speakers but some progress has been made. William Labov's comparison of the logic of the arguments of vernacular Black English speakers who were said to be disadvantaged with the argumentation patterns of standard English speakers was almost revolutionary. It presented the notion that meaning, creativity, originality and significance can be revealed through vernacular, non-prestige versions of a language. It should not be too difficult

to translate the significance of such activity into a bilingual situation.

2.3 Determing Goals

A third important language attitude question concerns the goals and objectives of the program itself. These do not successfully come about as a result of imposed norms but rather in terms of sensitivity to community values, beliefs and attitudes. Working with the San Francisco school system, we discovered that the most efficient method to insure success of the program is to first secure community input. Exactly what did the community expect from the program? Did they value their own language and culture? To what extent did they want to maintain it? What was their reaction to the host community's attempt to learn it? Did they value the host language and culture? To what extent did they want to learn it? These and many other questions were also asked of the school system representatives in order to determine the match or mismatch between the goals of the community and the goals of the schools. Obviously, great differences were found. In many cases, the school appeared to be interested primarily in maintaining a low budget. Others seemed more interesed in teaching the newcomers to be like them, linguistically and culturally. Often neither the community nor the schools were able to articulate or even conceptualize their goals. In such cases it behooved the consultants to state possible or tentative goals for them, then ask them whether or not these were their goals. It was a tender situation but one which was possible to carry out largely because all parties were treated with dignity.

These are only some of the attitude questions which need to be addressed in preparation for a bilingual program. There are many more which a socio-linguistic survey or, as if you prefer, a needs assessment could address.

3.0 Functional Language

Social, legislative and judicial pressures are making questions of this type crucial in the education of children from homes and communities where English is not the only dominant language. Experiences growing out of the Lau vs. Nichols Supreme Court decision, the Aspira Consent Decree in New York City and the various Bilingual Education bills has revealed a basic gap in the knowledge base for educational programming. There is no doubt that legislative and judicial action has effectively provided momentum for education to be more responsive to the needs of children who are linguistically and culturally different from the mainstream. However, the momentum requires educational technology that is only beginning to be developed.

For example, the Aspira Consent Decree requires that the placement of children in educational programs using English or Spanish as the medium of instruction be determined by their ability to "effectively participate" in the instruction. This legislation preceeds the technology upon which it can be based by a wide mark. No assessment instruments are available which purport to test this ability. There is a growing concensus among second language specialists that tests of grammar and phonology are not accurate predictors of effective participation and that functional language competence is far more crucial. That is, to say that a child is effectively participating in a classroom when he can seek clarification or get a turn seems much more crucial than when he can make proper use of past tense markers. To develop assessment instruments capable of testing what needs to be tested, there must be available an inventory of the functional language competence demanded in the educational setting at the various age/grade levels.

3.1 Studying Functional Language Competence

Functional language competence is the underlying knowledge that people have that allows them to use their language to make utterances in order to accomplish goals and to understand the utterances of others in terms of their goals. It includes a knowledge of what kinds of goals language can accomplish (the functions of language) and what are permissible utterances to accomplish each function (language strategies). Figure 2 displays a small sample of the functions, strategies and utterances that have been noticed for adult English speakers:

FUNCTION	STRATEGY	UTTERANCE
Giving an order	Performative	I hereby order you to come home.
	Direct Imperative	Give Jane some food.
	Wh-Imperative	Won't you please buy me some candy?
	Statement	Mr. Jones, I need some more paper.
Promising	Performative	I hereby promise you that I will be home by eleven.
	Future Statement	I'll be home by eleven.
	Conditional Statement	If you give me a dollar I'll be home by eleven.
	Questions	Will you let me take care of my own affairs?

FIGURE 2

This figure is in no way complete. There are many more functions, many other strategies for each function and, of course, many other utternaces which could be used for each strategy. More important, the figure is incomplete in that the context of each utterance needs to be specified to insure that the utterance is permissible to accomplish the function. For example, the sentence, "If you give me a dollar, I'll be home by eleven" is a promise only if the context shows that the addressee desires that the speaker come home at that time, and if the speaker believes that a dollar is valuable incentive. It could also be a threat if the context shows that the addressee desires the speaker to stay away and the speaker either considers receiving money to be inappropriate or considers a dollar to be too little money to be an incentive.

Functional language competence also accounts for knowing what utterances cannot do. In English, the statement "You are fired" works to fire the addressee but the utterance, "you are a frog," does not work to turn the addressee into a frog. In Western countries, at least, uttering the words, "I divorce you" does not constitute the completion of divorce proceedings but "I christen you John" does work to christen a child. Likewise if a teacher tells a student, "you have one minute to get over here," the utterance can act as an order but if the student says the same thing to the teacher such a meaning is, at best, far-fetched.

This very sketchy and incomplete discussion of some aspects of functional language competence shows that a speaker's underlying knowledge must be extensive and complex. In the literature of linguistics, sociolinguistics and philosophy three other terms are also used to refer to functional language competence: communicative competence/ pragmatics of natural language/speech act competence. All who have studied this phenomenon agree that language users cannot possibly learn and store in memory all of the complexities of functions, strategies and

utterances as item lists any more than they can store phonological or grammatical language as item lists. This knowledge must be learned and stored according to organizational principles. These principles may be considered constitutive rules which account for the successes and failures in the utterances meant as promises, for example, but they also separate promises from orders, requests for information, etc. In a similar manner, the constitutive rules of football not only account for the successes or failures of particular plays but also account for football and not baseball or basketball.

It appears that language functions, unlike phonology and grammar, are developmental almost throughout one's life. Few adults, for example, ever become proficient at the language function of condoling. For the sake of survival, children learn how to interrupt appropriately rather early. They learn that interruption is complex and often asymetrical (teachers can interrupt children rather blatantly but children must develop sophisticated strategies for interrupting teachers.) One also learns how to avoid being interrupted, how to get or avoid a turn in talking, how to refuse, how to clarify, how to obfuscate with dignity (see especially the Watergate transcripts). What may be considered rudeness may be only an imperfectly developed sense of interruption skills. It would seem critical for teachers to be able to distinguish between these matters.

3.2 Applying Functional Language Competence Cross-Culturally

Much about functional language appears to be very culture specific. What remains to be researched are specifics concerning the functional language competence necessary for effective interaction in an educational setting and a comparison of the realization of such competence across cultures. What appears to American teachers to be defiance in Vietnamese refugee children (arms folded in front of them) is actually a stance of submissiveness in that culture.

We need to know what functional language performance by children is judged necessary or desireable by teachers even though it may not be necessary or desireable for effective inter[illegible]n. We need to obtain data on the differences in functional language competence across cultures and languages and what the demands of the school setting are on such functions. Such research has only begun but it offers a much richer source of explanatory power concerning the mismatch of child language and school language than has heretofor been conceived.

4.0 Sociolinguistics and Educational Programs

The interference of one language system upon another is not a new concept in linguistics. Foreign accents are well known examples of this. In such cases the phonology of the mother tongue is used for both languages, modified only slightly if at all. Likewise, the grammatical patterns of one language system may intrude upon another system. Interference may be noted in the production of language, whether written or spoken, but also in the reception of language. In producing language, interference tends to result from the difference between the language systems. In receiving language, interference may also result from the similarities between the language systems. An educated speaker will need to be able to hear and understand a number of varieties of his language. Likewise such receptivity should be developed for a number of varieties of the literary language: formal, informal, older versions and slang.

As noted earlier, perhaps the single most important contribution which sociolinguistics is making in the area of language interference is in identifying the acquisition and effective use of language functions. It is quite likely that the ultimate but still elusive definition of an effective language user will depend on our ability to describe the control of language functions.

4.1 Materials and Resources

At the moment, very little is available to the schools in the area of functional language pedagogy. On the other hand, sociolinguistic contributions to learning language have indicated that context plays a very important role.

In the case of bilingual education, the principle of moving from known to unknown is fundamental. A child who speaks one language is required to learn a second language by the process of receiving content instruction in approximation to the realistic social context so necessary to good language learning. It is not the same as total immersion, but it comes considerably closer than pull-out or other language instruction which does not transmit content knowledge or skills in the process of acquisition. Naturally, such language instruction cannot always be accommodated by the schools, nor is it always the most relevant strategy.

A Sociolinguistic framework for bilingual education would specify such socially realistic contexts. In addition, sociolinguists would argue for several realistic social contexts. Language learning takes place in many contexts other than the classroom. In fact, children have the ability to learn any language apart from the teaching contexts. Studies of multilingualism in other countries offer clear evidence of this such as Sorrenson's research with Amazon Indians who live in a social structure which demands that one marry outside of one's own language group. Thus, husbands and wives always speak different native Indian languages. Local missionaries speak Spanish. But the children of the community have the most bilingual demands of all. Their playmates have many languages and the average child must go through life learning many languages.

Likewise, many bilingual children are not consciously aware of the fact that they are bilingual at all.[7] When questioned about language they respond that they speak "Grandma-talk" to Grandma and "playground-talk"to children. In the successful Canadian immersion programs some children know only that the school words, such as vert and rouge are different from the home words for the same colors, green and red. Such knowledge, whether conscious or not, is at the heart of what sociolinguists have referred to as language domains. Such domains are the road maps for the realistic contexts in which successful bilingualism can take place.

Considerable recent research has been done on the role of social context in native language acquisition. In Piaget's early work,[8] it was concluded that small children do not talk to each other in spontaneous play settings because they do not recognize each other's perspectives and adapt their speech to their needs. More recent research has led to different conclusions. Shatz and Gelman[9] also studied the four year olds' ability to adjust their speech to the listeners in a series of experiments. Their studies indicate that four year olds adjust to two year olds in one manner but to peers and adults with a much fuller range. Rosenthal's research[10] indicated that three to four year olds have learned to discriminate between languages spoken to them and by four to five they are able to distinguish between dialects of the same language.

The sociolinguistic emphasis on realistic social context in bilingual education has the ultimate benefit of facilitating the transfer of language skills from one learner to another which is, of course, the optimum context of language learning. Good language instruction will need to develop more creative ways of making use of peer teaching, a long-held tenet of socio-linguistics. Perhaps the most successful peer teaching program at present is

the Hawaii English Project in which decisions about learning are made by the learners. The teachers, in the program, are not regarded as the main source of information for their K to 2 students. The program is currently under experimentation in a bilingual community in California and it certainly bears watching.

A critical concept of sociolinguistics involves the continuum, in contrast to binary polarities. During that research on various vernaculars, for example, it became clear that speakers of a dialect do not always produce either the stigmatized or the favored pronunciation and grammar and that individual as well as group distinction in language production tends to fall at various points on a continuum rather than at one or the other end of it. The principal of the continuum is realistic in that it accounts for variability and provides a finer unit of measure for language statements.

The Sociolinguistic continuum also obtains in the dimension of time, particularly in terms of how language change takes place. For the bilingual education classrooms, the principle of the continuum is critical. Most language learners are at some sort of stage on a continuum of language acquisition. Teacher expectations must be calibrated to such a continuum and not locked into an expectation of native-like perfection. As noted earlier, it is difficult to imagine how a child could learn a language without making mistakes in it. Such mistakes often can be plotted on a predictable continuum of acquisition. A good bilingual education program will account for such a continuum.

What this section on materials and resources says, in effect, is that the relative newness of the idea of sociolinguistically based materials and resources precludes their availability at this time. In any case, sociolinguistics is not a method or a bag of tricks and its influence may be much subtler than this. Sociolinguistic knowledge of realistic contexts, the continuum and the appreciation of language variability is more likely to be incorporated in new materials,

teacher training programs and evaluation procedures.

4.2 Evaluation

The preceeding focuses on language attitudes and on language functions were presented as useful areas of contribution to bilingual education from the perspective of sociolinguistics. Naturally they also imply a concurrent sociolinguistic description of the languages involved, although such work was not the focus of this paper. These sociolinguistic contributions (or potential contributions) could also be of assistance in the area of evaluation.

As noted earlier, the Aspira Consent Decree in New York City specifies that the school system should determine in which language, English or Spanish, the child can most effectively participate in the classroom. That school system's department of research pursued the question by devising two discrete point tests, one in Spanish and one in English, made up largely of phonological and grammatical items. The assumption was that such test questions will yield an answer related to the child's ability to participate in the classroom in one language better than the other. It is not our purpose here to catalog all the absurdities of this procedure but it should be stated that it is not likely that any test of grammar or phonology will adequately reveal the potential for effective participation in the classroom.

It did not occur to the test developers that to determine such participation, one might observe the langueages in use in the classroom, to define what "effective participation" really means, and to seek out subjective judgments of such effectiveness on the part of teachers or even peers. Instead they found some surface level measurements of language ability, measured them and pretended that

they were important. What the legislation calls for is a clear statement of what really matters in terms of effective language functioning in the classroom.

If the schools had only stopped to consider the matter, they might have concluded that it is likely to be far more important to be able to seek clarification than to produce appropriate rounding vowels or grammar. Empirical evidence is clear that one can become the American Secretary of State without producing American sounding English speech. On the other hand, if one cannot use language effectively to clarify, to promise, to assert, to request, to command, to refuse, to get invited, to open, to close, to continue, to interrupt, etc., one will not get very far at all.

In a separate research project at the Center for Applied Linguistics, the study of functional language use and development is underway. It focuses on children age four to eight in a monolingual, middle class environment.

This research project was set up to describe the developmental aspects of some of these language functions. The results of such research will get at the heart of what it means to effectively participate in the classroom, at least in terms of language use.

The field of educational evaluation, however, is still in its infancy, and methods of assessing bilingual education programs are not better off than are evaluations of other types of programs. It will behoove any bilingual education program to display clear and convincing evidence of its value, however, and so we must constantly work toward improving our knowledge base. In America,

millions of dollars are spent annually on local school systems for bilingual education. Our largest funding source, the U.S. office of Education, has accumulated hundreds of evaluations of individual programs (although it is problematic as to whether or not anybody ever reads them). A recent random sample of one hundred such evaluations yielded only seven which met our two minimal criteria: that the evaluation be carried out by an outside evaluator (not connected to the project) and that the treatment group be compared to some equal non-treatment group. In an effort to build an effective bilingual education evaluation model, the Center for Applied Linguistics staff recently undertook the evaluation of downstate Illinois bilingual programs. The following will be a description of the current status of evaluation of Title VII programs by the American Institute for Research (AIR), followed by the CAL evaluation model.

4.2.1 The A.I.R. Model

The Bilingual Education Act mandated an evaluation of Government funded bilingual education programs with results available in November 1976. The study has three parts: an exploratory study, an exemplary study and an impact study. The following is only a capsule summary of these rather lengthy preliminary reports.

The exploratory study indicates that bilingual education has had a positive impact by increasing the student's self-concept, by increasing parent participation in the education process and by generally developing a community recognition of language diversity. The general conclusions indicate that the major handicaps in the program were the shortage of capable bilingual teachers, the lack of teaching materials and some flaws in the funding process which limited the usefulness of the program.

The exemplary study was an effort to idenify programs which could serve as models for doing things to other schools. The four programs eventually selected included three in Texas (Spanish) and one in Maine (French). These programs were ostensibly selected (therefore, valued) because of their effectiveness in teaching school content in both English and the home language and because of their bicultural aspects. In reality, they were selected primarily because of their ability to teach English to non-native children. This is a serious flaw in the model and has received much criticism.

The impact study selected 37 Title VII programs which were in their fourth and fifth years of operation (and were therefore assumed to be solid. A series of tests were administered via the child's dominant language or, in the case of bilingual children, in both languages. The areas of measurement included language assessment in Spanish, language in English, mathematics assessment in Spanish, mathematics assessment in English and student attitudes. Also examined were the effects of class, income, community, project level, etc. The results were then matched to the comparison program. The further stages of the work examined which aspects of the program have the greatest impact (teacher training, school environment, individual factors, etc.) The major flaw in this section of the work concerns the test instruments themselves. Existing standardized tests in English (Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills-CTBS) and Spanish (Problema de lectura) are the sole measurement instruments for reading abilities. For Spanish mathematics, the CTBS) was translated into Spanish.

In addition, the impact study also includes a classroom observation component, noting teacher-student interaction. Self concept is being measured

by a student questionnaire in Spanish and English. Parents and teachers are also given questionnaires to assess their attitudes toward bilingualism, the school, each other, the children, etc.

The significant aspect of the AIR evaluation is that it addresses the major claims of bilingual education:

a. that children will learn basic skills and concepts faster and more efficiently in their mother tongue.

b. that children will learn to read better through their native language.

c. that children will develop or maintain positive self concepts through instruction in their native tongue.

d. that the culture and language of non-natives will be maintained rather than eroded through a bilingual program.

One can question the methods used by AIR in addressing these claims. It is my contention that assessment instruments which measure language and culture are guilty of viewing only the surface of the problem. When measuring language, one is tempted to measure what one can see, especially the vocabulary and the pronunciation. These features appear to be easy to measure and they occur frequently enough to appear to be significant. Unfortunately they often provide the very discrete point measurements which are the least useful measurements of language ability. It has been observed that language is like an iceberg, with only the superficial parts in plain view. Figure 3 may be illustrative.

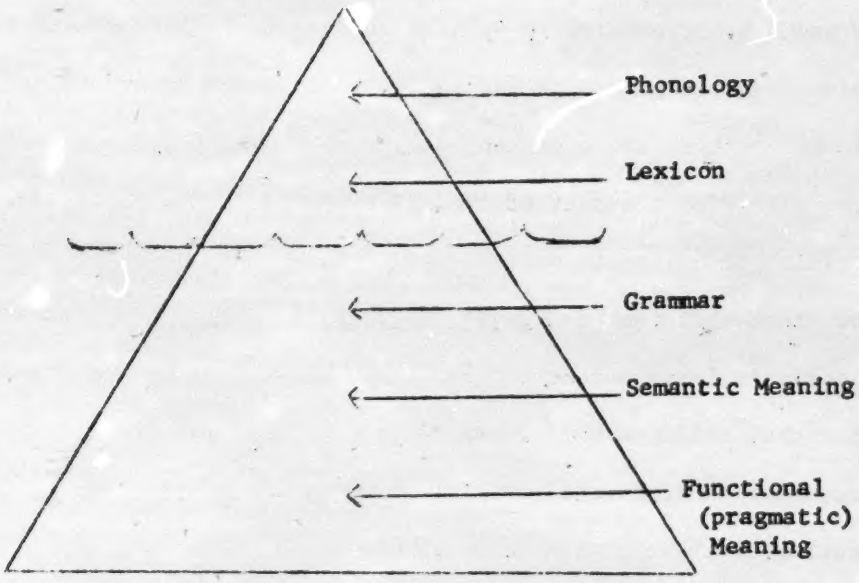


FIGURE 3

There is difficulty in measuring the really important aspects of language, especially semantic and pragmatic meaning, but these are certainly more critical, as noted earlier, than are vocabulary and pronunciation. Most language tests deal only with the surface phenomena and hope that these features measure language ability. In addition such tests tend to wrench language from its normal spoken context, they try to measure spoken language with written language measures, and they assume that skills are learned early and maintained at a level conscious enough to be measured long after such early skills have been allocated to the point of unconsciousness. More realistically, the aspects of language most often measured in language learning might be seen in a slightly different way. (Figure 4).

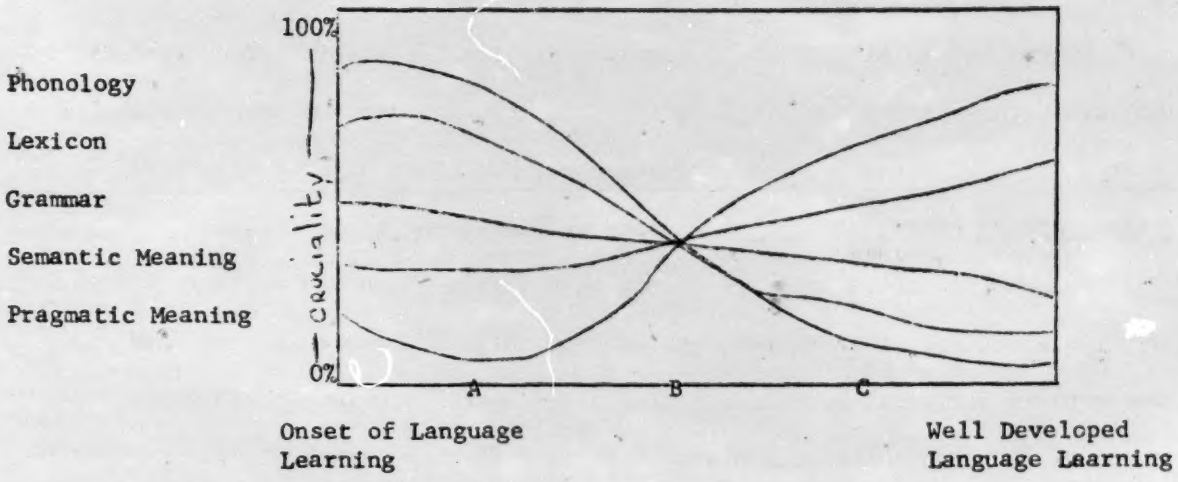


FIGURE 4

Figure 4 is a schematic representation of the various language accesses called on by a speaker as he acquires a second language. At any given stage in the acquisition of the language (onset A, B, C, well developed) all accesses are in operation but in different degrees of cruciality and in different relationships to each other. Thus, in communication, a learner at onset will be expected to maintain a high awareness of phonology and lexicon which, at stage C, becomes automatic and therefore less useful to measure. The point here is that most language tests do not take such a dynamic into consideration. Frequently they assume that phonology and lexicon, important enough at the onset, continue to be useful measurement points throughout the language program. They do not. Nor have such programs learned to call on semantic and pragmatic meaning as learning devices or strategies in the later stages of language learning. Good evaluation measures of bilingual programs will get less than useful indicators of language ability until we learn to control these factors.

4.2.2 The Illinois Model

In the autumn of 1975 the Center for Applied Linguistic agreed to serve as the evaluators of the downstate Illinois Bilingual Education Program with Dr. Andrew Cohen as Director. The project contained three major components: a retrospective study, some pilot studies and an ethnographic study.

The retrospective study is simply an effort to find and evaluate all the available records, test scores, grades, etc., for as many children as possible who were in bilingual education programs during the previous three years. A total of 220 such children who are still in such a program in third and fourth grade were located and their files are currently being analyzed. A control population of children were just starting the bilingual education program in third or fourth grade serves as a control group.

There are three pilot studies: one uses the Basic Inventory of Natural Language (BINL), one uses the use of SOBER-Español and the last is an ethnographic study.

The BINL technique, developed by Charles H. Clark, attempts to elicit child language by avoiding the asymetrical adult to child question routine. The primary goal of BINL is to train children to tell stories to their peers resulting in analyzable language data without adult intervention. The materials used include pictures, sequence pictures, and other devices. The resulting data are analyzed by teachers. Our study compared the BINL results with an independently motivated error analysis which our staff developed to try to determine whether or not the BINL actually measures what it claims to measure. Our error analysis was done on the entirety of the recorded material from which the BINL samples were taken only, of course, with a limited number of children (20 children from second to fifth grades in Argo, Illinois). The major conclusion of our study concerns the teachers as a language evaluator. We found

that in spite of the simplicity of the sampling procedures and the simplicity of the scoring procedures, teachers tend to ignore specific procedures and sometimes tamper with the data. That the teachers seemed prone to doctor up the results, for whatever reasons, seems to indicate that the use of non-classroom teachers as evaluators would reduce the energy wasted on correcting the research after the fact. Other findings of the study indicate that the BINL puts too heavy a value on subordination as an indicator of language proficiency.

The SOBER-Español pilot study is currently underway and results are not yet available. The SOBER-Español test provides a rigorous taxonomy of tasks involved in reading Spanish, rather than English or a translation from English. This program is being watched carefully because, until recently, American teachers have known more about how to teach English reading in bilingual programs than how to teach Spanish reading. The significance of this for bilingual education is that any assessment of reading abilities will need to be carried out with instruments designed specifically for that language, not merely a translated version.

The ethnographic study was conducted in Elgin, Illinois. Rather than to study large numbers of students for general features, it was decided to study intensively a small number of students, in this case, three first grades. These children were videotaped in a number of settings throughout the school year, the measurement points being the number of seconds of talk in English, the number of seconds of talk in Spanish, the context of the interaction, the gloss of the interaction and code switching within an interaction.

In addition to the differential use of language, this study also analyzed motivational, personnel and social aspects of speech within the classroom. The sort of questions asked were the following:

1. Is the subject more verbal in the bilingual classroom or the monolingual classroom?

2. Are there more peer interactions in one or the other settings?

3. Does the child participate more often in teacher directed activities in one setting than the other?

4. What is the nature of the child's interactions from one setting to the next - is he more social, more cooperative, more involved in studies, etc.?

This is not the place to report findings of this study but only to indicate some dimensions of the evaluation instrument. Ethnographic evaluation is becoming more and more prominent as an alternative to statistical or quantitative designs. In the case of the bilingual classroom, careful ethnography is a must.

5.0 Conclusions

This paper has suggested that recent sociolinguistic research has a great deal to contribute to the field of bilingual education. Language attitude studies have immediate application for all important survey work in the context of bilingualism. It is difficult to set goals for any educational project without first obtaining the feelings of the community, the teachers, the children and the parents. Functional language studies have immediate application for the development of evaluation instruments, since a child's ability to use language efficiently is vastly more critical than lexicon, pronunciation or grammar. Not all of the answers to the educational concerns of bilingualism can be located in extant sociolinguistic research, but the directions have been laid out and new and insightful findings are developing. Any prospective bilingual education program would do well to look carefully at these matters.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Aspira Consent Decree is a similar piece of legislation relating to New York City Puerto Rican children.
2. These assertions were made at the TESOL meeting in Los Angeles in March, 1975.
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10. Rosenthal, Marilyn. The Acquisition of Children's Awareness of Language.
11. Flora V. Rodriguez-Brown. et. al. "Language Interactions in a Bilingual Classroom: An Ethnographic Study" paper presented at the 60th Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, 1976